

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claim Status

Examiner reopened prosecution of the claims after allowance. Claims 11–13, 22–25, 31–33, 38, and 40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Cometto (U.S. 2005/0169188 A1). Claims 14–21, 26–30, 34–37, and 39 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten into independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants amend claims 11, 22, and 31 to incorporate the limitations of claims 16, 26, and 35, respectively. Accordingly, Applicants cancel claims 16, 26, and 35. Applicants amend claim 17 to reflect proper dependency. Claims 11–15, 17–25, 27–34, and 36–40 remain pending.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note that this application was filed on January 29, 2004. For the sole purpose of expediting prosecution and without commenting on patentability, Applicants amend independent claims 11, 22, and 31 to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 16, 26, and 35, respectively. As such, Applicants request that a notice of allowance be issued in this case.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. In the course of the foregoing discussions, Applicants may have at times referred to claim limitations in shorthand fashion, or may have focused on a particular claim

element. This discussion should not be interpreted to mean that the other limitations can be ignored or dismissed. The claims must be viewed as a whole, and each limitation of the claims must be considered when determining the patentability of the claims. Moreover, it should be understood that there may be other distinctions between the claims and the prior art which have yet to be raised, but which may be raised in the future.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. It is believed that no extensions of time or fees are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this document. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this document, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Conley Rose, P.C.'s Deposit Account No. 03-2769/2120-02700/HTDC.

Respectfully submitted,

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